DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 034 199 AL 002 205

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TITLE The Siesta is Over.
PUB DATE Feb 69
NOTE 21p.; Paper delivered at the Education Conference "Improving the Preparation of Educational Personnel to Serve in School Systems Enrolling a Significant Number of Mexican American Students," New Mexico State U., Feb. 13-15, 1969

EDRS PRICE EDRS Price MF-$0.25 HC-$1.15
DESCRIPTORS *Bilingual Education, Community Involvement, Culturally Disadvantaged, *Culture Conflict, *English (Second Language), Mexican American History, *Mexican Americans, Teacher Attitudes, *Teacher Education

ABSTRACT

The author surveys the history of attitudes and approaches toward educating Mexican-Americans and reviews some of the most outstanding contributions in the field. "The Invisible Minority" (National Education Association, 1966) states that the most acute educational problem in the Southwest is that which involves Mexican-American children. Dr. Nolan Estes, Associate Commissioner for Elementary and Secondary Education. Senator Ralph Yarborough, and Commissioner Harold Howe II are among those quoted in this paper for their efforts to promote bilingual and bicultural education. The 1960 census for Texas revealed the Mexican-Americans to have the highest dropout rate and the fewest number of persons 14 or over completing school. Nearly one fourth of the Mexican-Americans in Texas 25 years old or over had not completed one year of education; close to 40 percent of the adults were functional illiterates (fourth grade completed or less). Mexican-American student demands in Los Angeles are similar to those voiced in Chicago and San Antonio. The author balances his description of some of the difficulties met with by educators and students with mention of some instances of progress. A listing of hearings and conference reports is appended. (AMM)

ED034199

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THE SIESTA IS OVER

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AL 002 205

Delivered at Education Conference
"Improving the Preparation of
Educational Personnel to serve in
school systems enrolling a significant
number of Mexican American students."
New Mexico State University
Las Cruces, New Mexico
Feb. 13-15 [1969]

I am filled with personal pride and joy at being able to address you today However, at the same time -- because of the events of 1968 throughout the nation and more especially in the Southwest -- I realize my awesome responsibility to try and articulate what our people -- particularly our Mexican American youth -- are saying loud and clear. If I sound a little harsh, I want you to know from the bottom of my heart, that I say it in much milder terms than in the manner actually expressed. And if you and I do not listen and respond, then I am afraid that voices such as mine will be muffled in the tumult that is to come.

I feel that this, the first of three such conferences, is a significant follow-up to a three year period of events, not all related by cause and effect, but very much related.

How providential that this first conference is being held here in Las Cruces, New Mexico, because we know that for more than one hundred years the Mexican American child, -- student, young man -- has suffered the cross of bigotry, discrimination, disdain, isolation and finally relegated to an insignificant place in society. How interesting that this beginning takes place in New Mexico since a new Mexican American, a new breed of young, articulate, courageous, determined youth is merging today; can we call, as they do, "La Nueva Raza." This new youth no longer hangs his head low, but very much in the air, exerting themselves, seeking an identity, which for many has been lost, refusing to join the ranks of those who have historically been relegated to human failure. Today, here in Las Cruces, I join my voice

with theirs and I hope you will join me to say, "Ya basta, The Siesta is over!" You the trainers of teachers can and will make the differences.

As keynote speaker, I feel that the biggest contribution I can make to you the participants of this conference, is to present the historical happenings which form the background for the importance of this conference. Let me point out for you what national officials, government representatives, educators, administrators and students have been saying and doing for the past three years. In a word, the "why" of the development of the theme of your conference.

You have stated as the ultimate goal of this conference "TO IMPROVE THE QUALIFICATIONS AND SUPPLY OF EDUCATIONAL PERSONNEL WORKING WITH MEXICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS." A very good question is why? Are you really convinced? Is it not true that the degree of success of your efforts will be measured by the degree of this conviction? Let me make a mosaic for you.

In October of 1966, the National Education Association held a conference in Tucson, Arizona, from which came a written report, THE INVISIBLE MINORITY. Many important things are said in that work, which, by the way, I recommend to your reading, however, of particular importance for us is what is expressed in the forward:

> The most acute educational problem in the Southwest is that which involves Mexican American children. In the elementary and secondary schools of five states in that region--Arizona, California, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas--there are approximately 1.75 million children with Spanish surnames. Many of these young people experience academic failure in school. At best, they have a limited success. A large percentage become school dropouts.
>
> Little headway is being made against the problem. While teachers and administrators are and have been deeply concerned about it, they are also for the most part perplexed as to just what

to do. The traditional approach has been simply to ignore the unique circumstances of children from Spanish-speaking homes, to assume that even with little or no experience in speaking English they would somehow learn as easily as their English-speaking classmates.

Obviously this did not happen. As a result, some schools have attacked the problem directly by grouping all their Mexican American children in a pre-first grade where they would spend a year learning English and laying a foundation for regular school experiences. Such a procedure has the built-in disadvantage of creating an over-age group of students who must then go all the way through school a jump behind their peers.

Teachers with insight into the problems of Spanish-speaking children have come to realize that two separate but parallel purposes need to be pursued. One is to help the Mexican American student adjust to (Note: it does not say "mold into") the dominant "Anglo culture." The other is to foster in him a pride in his Spanish-speaking culture and Mexican origin. These teachers have chosen to recognize the Spanish-speaking culture and Mexican origin. These teachers have chosen to recognize the Spanish-speaking ability of Mexican American students as a distinct asset and to build onto it rather than to root it out. They have found that Spanish properly used can be a bridge to the learning of English instead of an obstacle and that Mexican American students can become truly bilingual and bicultural.

To meet the problem fully, however, further legislation and substantially increased appropriations are needed. A more intensive effort to recruit additional teachers among the Spanish-speaking is another imperative. Additional research, especially of a demonstration nature, is yet another. An extended series of needs could be listed. BUT THE URGENT NEED IS FOR ACTION AND INNOVATION IN LOCAL SCHOOL DISTRICTS ALMOST EVERYWHERE.

The NEA Conference and the Tucson Report challenged each of the participants to return to their communities and states and sponsor conferences to consider the problem. With this kind of impetus, a number of us began planning for what is known today as the Texas Conference for Educational Opportunities for Mexican Americans. This was held in San Antonio, Texas,

April 13-15, 1967. It was agreed by the chief planners that three agencies most responsible for the educational change should sponsor the conference: a) The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory in Austin; b) the Inter-American Educational Center known today as Region 20 Center; and c) the Texas Education Agency. For the first time a statewide effort was made for concentration on the issues as NEA pointed out. As a matter of fact, the opening paragraph of the recommendations and resolutions reads, "the objective is to recognize that a problem exists."

One of the main speakers, Dr. Nolan Estes, the Associate Commissioner for Elementary and Secondary Education, U.S. Office of Education, said some important things which you and I can use today:

> Today American education is caught up in a revolution of change and growth that has not been matched in the history of this nation. In every state, in every city, in nearly every town there is revolution at work in the schools and in the community. It is a ferment and a stirring marked by a new, intense interest in two concepts -- QUALITY EDUCATION AND EDUCATIONAL EQUALITY FOR ALL.

He further adds:

> And everywhere--in the South and in the northern cities --the ugly bolt of discrimination and segregation, a discrimination that touched the Mexican American, the Puerto Rican, the Oriental, the Negro and the poor of whatever race, color or creed...
>
> We have finally turned the corner in education for the Mexican American, for the Negro and for other disadvantaged groups...Ahead lie out twin goals--quality education and equality of educational opportunity for all.

To attain these goals, Dr. Estes pointed out four things:

> First: the Mexican American community -- the political, educational, business and labor leaders of the community-- must now make sure that they are taking full advantage of the educational opportunities being offered under the new federal programs. The money and the opportunity are there.

The laws and the programs are there. The technical knowledge for solving the problems are there.

They must now apply the power of community action, working with their local educational leaders and groups, to make sure that they are properly represented in those programs. This means organization, study and work. It means joining and becoming active in the PTA's and other community groups interested in action. In short, it means developing "school power" -- power and influence in the school community to achieve proper representation and an equitable distribution of the money and programs in which they should share.

Second: we must all work for an end to the law which says that all classes in this state -- and all other states -- shall be taught only in English.

...There may have been good reason once for this law, but that reason is not valid today. Our country is blessed with the richness of many cultures and languages; Spanish; German, and many others. It is rich and strong, and it can tolerate differences among us which once it feared.

Third: Bilingualism is a necessary educational tool for thousands of out of school children...Education can play a key role in that war on poverty.

Finally: local, state and federal agencies must join together in a common crusade in the war on ignorance and educational deprivation.

Education is an intensely local function. It cannot be directed from Washington or Austin. It can only come from a local school and a local teacher. Today, as never before, that local school bears new and heavy responsibilities. For our state and national goals extend far beyond the boundaries of that school district. And these national goals -- security, defense, technological development, conservation of human and cultural resources, and equal opportunity -- demand a higher allegiance from all our citizens.

We hear a voice from a barrio in El Paso, one who had traveled a long distance to make sure the poor were represented:

Let the poor speak out; provide conferences for them, too.
Let our cultures be dual if that is what we need to be effective citizens.
Educate us for college, and do not let the fact that none of us have money influence out type of preparation. Do

> not make school a marking-time institution for us by having us take shop or by throwing us into special education because we do not answer the I.Q. tests correctly when they are not for us. Let the crime of speaking only English in school be erased from the books.
> Do not isolate our education as a problem, but bring in the other factos involved, such as health, housing, employment.
> Do not sit on funds, State or Federal, which would really help us better ourselves, and release those that let the establishment maintain control.
> Integrate our schools; I don't mean student-wise but teacher-wise. Why must all Mexican schools have all the bad teachers and bad programs? Why don't we have those that understand our customs and modes?

He concludes: "venimos a este que profesa ser rico en oportunidades. Mis abuelos y yo no las hemos encontrado...Quizas...Mañana.."

It was the following month that Senator Ralph Yarbrough, taking his cue from the Tucson Conference, began the hearings on Bill S. 428, the first effort on the national level for legislation for Bilingual Education. The two volumes contain tremendous support from all over the country. Two introductory remarks are worthy of mention:

> The failure of our schools to educate Spanish-speaking students is reflected in comparative dropout rates. In the 5 Southwestern states of Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, Colorado, and California, Anglos 15 years of age and over have completed an average of 12 years of school compared with 8.1 years for Spanish-surname students.
>
> We are faced initially with the need to make a concentrated attack in a number of areas in order to produce significant results. Bilingual teachers must be trained; new curriculums and new teaching materials must be developed; large-scale pilot projects must be carried out to provide models which can then be utilized elsewhere.

During the interim other states held statewide conferences -- coming up with similar findings. On April 25-26 the First National Conference on Educational Opportunities for Mexican Americans was held in Austin, Texas.

The planners would have considered an attendance of 800 a successful conference. As things turned out, more than 1,100 people registered, followed a few weeks later with nearly 1,000 requests for materials. The resounding

success of the Conference could only be attributed to the national anxiety for something to be done.

As the Texas conference presented various ongoing programs in the State, the national conference revealed various programs around the nation. (These are described in the Proceedings of the Conference.)

Many important topics were touched upon; however, permit me to take a few quotes from Commissioner Harold Howe II:

> I would like to talk about the "education problem" -- and it is basically just one problem: helping every youngster -- whatever his home background, whatever his home language, whatever his ability -- become all he has in him to become.
>
> Such a goal is a lofty one, and it is doubtful that the schools will ever achieve it perfectly. What must concern us is the degree to which many schools fail to come within a country mile of that goal. If Mexican American children have a higher drop-out rate than any other identifiable group in the Nation --and they do--the schools cannot explain away their failure by belaboring the "Mexican American problem". <u>The problem, simply, is that the schools have failed with these children.</u>
>
> Commissioner Howe then quoted a paragraph from Dr. Severo Gomez, who had heard the following and used it to describe the attitudes of some teachers. "They are good people. Their only handicap is the bag full of superstitions and silly notions they inherited from Mexico. When they get rid of these superstitions they will be good Americans. The schools help more than anything else. In time, the Latins will think and act like Americans. A lot depends on whether we can get them to switch from Spanish to English. When they speak English at home like the rest of us, they will be part of the American way of life. I just don't understand why they are so insistent about using Spanish. They should realize that it's not the American tongue.
>
> In a hundred subtle ways, we have told people of all origins other than English that their backgrounds are somehow cheap or humorous. The tragic thing is that this process has succeeded. Of the incredible diversity of languages and traditions that the people of a hundred nations brought to this country, virtually nothing remains except in scattered enclaves of elderly people who are more often viewed as objects of curiosity rather than respect.

Mexican Americans are one of the few exceptions to this American rule of cultural elimination through cultural disdain. A distinctive Spanish-Indian-Mexican culture survives in the United States.

As you know this culture has been a handicap, not a blessing, in the attempts of Mexican Americans to prosper. Basic to the success of any such attempt is a good education, and the cultural backgrounds of Spanish-speaking children have produced a staggering amount of educational failures.

In support of bilingual bicultural programs three points are stressed:

First: Evidence is clear that people learn languages best if they learn them young. It is rather paradoxical that in the southwest some elementary schools have forbidden children to speak Spanish, while at the same time many of our secondary schools require students to learn another language.

Second: the proper conduct of bilingual programs should produce dramatic improvement in the performance of Spanish-speaking children. (he quoted Dr. Knowleton..."The majority who fight their way through to a high school level often have the dubious distinction of being illiterate in two languages.")

Third: he says "this advantage for bicultural bilingual programs for Anglo as well as Mexican children may well be the most important for our country."

The notion of cultural superiority has seriously harmed the U.S. in this century in its dealings with other peoples. In the middle of this century, after nearly 150 years of largely ignoring the rest of this world, we have lumbered into the family of nations as an international force. A position of international responsibility was thrust upon us, and we were ill-prepared to assume it. In fact, one of the great motivations behind the present set of Federal programs for education was the lack of Americans who could speak foreign languages or deal with other peoples in terms of their own cultures. The result was that we often offended people whom we were trying to help or befriend.

If we are to gain the friendship of these new nations and strengthen our ties with much older nations that have felt the strength of American parochialism in the past, we must give our children the ability to move with ease and respect in cultures other than their own.

It was soon after this conference that the Puerto Ricans in New York, representing more than two million people, held their first Educational Conference for the Puerto Rican. Some of the Mexican American leadership

was invited to this conference, and it was interesting to hear how similar their problems were to ours.

On December 9-14 of this past year, the U. S. Commission on Civil Rights held its first major hearings on the Mexican American. It took place in San Antonio.

From the Educational component of the hearings, important testimony from Staff papers and Administrators and people was revealed, now under oath, these things were heard:

> Mexican American students are isolated by school district, by schools within individual districts, by ability grouping within schools, and by selection of vocational rather than academic programs.
>
> School administration in the area is Anglo controlled...Most Mexican American principals, vice-principals and teachers are assigned to Mexican American Schools.
>
> Although state and federal aide comprise a greater proportion of total revenue in Mexican American districts, per pupil expenditures are not equalized with those in Anglo districts.
>
> Mexican American students perform less well on verbal-oriented I.Q. and achievement tests given in English, which may not validly reflect the potential of those students. Interpreters of their scores tend to assign them to classes for underachievers, or to counsel them away from a college preparatory curriculum.
>
> If students attend schools in a high density area of Mexican American population, the probabilities they will drop out are greater than for Mexican American youngsters enrolled in predominantly Anglo, or ethnically mixed schools.
>
> Because Mexican American districts are financially less capable they suffer from inadequacy of facilities, and non-competetive teaching salaries. As a result 89% of the non-college degree teachers employed in the nine San Antonio school districts are concentrated in the predominantly Mexican American districts.

In a sense, the picture presented was as follows based on the 1960 census:

Dropouts	Total for Texas	42.4%
	Anglo	33.1
	Negro	60.1
	Mexican American	68.9

Median years of school completed (1950-60) by persons 14 years or older were used again as illustrative of educational disparities:

	1950	1960
All groups in Texas	9.5	10.4
Anglo	10.3	10.7
Negro	7.6	8.7
Mexican American	4.5	6.2

It is interesting to note that the group which has made the largest gains is the Mexican American; however, we still have a long way to go.

Less well known, but equally distressing, are the 1960 census figures revealing that nearly one fourth of the Mexican Americans in Texas 25 years old or older had not completed one year of education, and that close to 40 percent of Mexican American adults were functional illiterates; fourth grade completed or less. Based also on 1960 figures, other sources indicate that while 21 percent of the Mexican American student population graduated from high school less than 2 percent graduated from college.

A wide variety of educators, community leaders and Mexican American students were invited to give an explanation for this picture, some of their testimony was the following:

> The alleged colonized existence of Mexican Americans following the military conquests of 1836 and 1848 (an historian from the Far West Laboratory of Educational Research and Development, Berkeley, California).
>
> The genetic differences of the Mexican American (an Anglo junior high principal, San Antonio). You can imagine the excitement this caused.

A questionable assumption underlying the whole system is that pupils are to be molded in conformity with a stereotype image of the All-Around American type -- one most nearly resembling the ideas of the white middle class. Under such an assumption Mexican Americans and other minorities are educable to the extent that they can replicate the ideal. If they do not meet this expectation, they have failed, not the school.

Teacher education, textbooks, teaching methods, curriculum planning and teacher certification took little or no account of the convergence of two languages and of at least two cultures in the Southwest.

It becomes evident that the Anglo student, not to speak of his Negro peer, is also being deprived of an education consonant with his tri-ethnic environment. Worse still, the school confirms the Anglo student in an ethnocentricism that will make him view the "culturally different" as somehow humorous, deviant and underdeveloped.

In the typical predominantly Mexican American high school, the ratio of counselors to students fluctuates from one for 600, to one for 2,100.

No officially approved Texas history textbook was considered fair to the contributions of Mexico or Spain, of of the Spanish-surnamed Texas patriots, in the opinion of any of the Anglo or Mexican American educators testifying.

Punishment for speaking Spanish was testified to by students. Until two weeks prior to the hearing, the largest predominantly Mexican American high school in El Paso punished the speaking of Spanish on the grounds with after school detention.

A disproportionate number of Mexican American students are placed in or counseled to take, vocational subjects instead of the college preparatory course. Witnesses testifying on vocational education, including the chairman of the Governor's Committee on Public School Education, agreed that teaching equipment is badly outmoded, so that students are trained, in effect, for non-marketable skills.

The average reading ability of graduates of predominantly Mexican-American pupils the almost universally recognized fact of their inadequacy for the "culturally different" child. The result is still a large number of them being placed in slow-learner track systems, and in some cases, in classes for the mentally retarded.

PTA meetings are frequently held during working hours, thereby markedly limiting parental participation. (Yet how often have we not heard that parents are not interested?)

A number of scientific studies point to serious value conflicts confronted by the Mexican American pupil in much of the present educational system. (The speaker, Dr. Manuel Ramirez, was one who gave some magnificent testimony in this regard, and I am sure can develop this more fully for you.)

This is the picture of the educational status as presented by witnesses at the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights hearings.

It is interesting to note that the Civil Rights hearings were only giving credibility to what Mexican American students have been insisting, demanding, and demonstrating about over the nation. The past school year saw a phenomemon of confrontation between the school and the Mexican American community in a large number of cities and towns throughout the country. This affected the midwest in Chicago and Kansas City the Southwest in Los Angeles, El Paso, Denver, Sierra Blanca, San Antonio and Edcouch Elsa The primary target is clear in all cases, the quest for "quality education" that Commissioner Howe and Dr. Estes have advocated and the development of their talents to their fullest. Is this not what educators tell us education is all about? Obviously, the students feel now they have not been recipients of it-- the pictures above substantiate this contention.

What were the students saying in Los Angeles?

1. Textbooks and curriculum revised to show Mexican contributions to society to show the injustices they have suffered and to concentrate on Mexican folklore.

2. Compulsory bilingual and bicultural education in all East Los Angeles schools, with teachers and administrators to receive training in speaking Spanish and in Mexican cultural heritage.

3. Counselor-student ratios reduced and counselors must speak Spanish and have a knowledge of Mexican cultural heritage.

4. Students must not be grouped into slow learning classes based on the poor tests currently in use which often mistake language problems for lack of intelligence.

5. Community parents to be engaged as teacher aides.

6. The industrial arts program must be revitalized to provide training for entry into industry; modern equipment and techniques must be provided.

These are only part of 30 demands, presented in the interest of basic approaches for better education for the Mexican American. Compare these with what was said later in Chicago:

1. Qualified bilingual Spanish American counselors.

2. One elective year of Latin-American culture and history taught by qualified bilingual Latin-American teachers.

3. Special TESL classes for non-English speaking students to be made a part of the school curriculum.

4. A Spanish American assistant principal at the high school with heavy Spanish-speaking population.

5. Monthly Spanish meetings of the PTA conducted by a community authorized Spanish-speaking person.

In San Antonio, the demands were very similar:

1. More counselors, and those who will encourage students toward higher education.

2. Bilingual education programs.

3. History courses depicting the Mexican American and his role.

4. Curriculum which will prepare students for college, and the ability to compete at the college level.

5. Higher mathematics.

6. Right to speak Spanish on school grounds without being punished.

7. Vocational courses which will produce a marketable skill.

8. Adequate and improved facilities.

The list of grievances and subsequent demands, wherever they took place were very similar. The only differance was the degree of demand, the locale, and the order in which they were listed.

There are those who suggest that there are external forces guiding the efforts in these cities. Take it from me, it is a beautiful phenomenon of a movement that is swelling. A spontaneous swelling of an awakening people. The goal is quality education. By the way, we heard earlier this was a national goal; in essence, the youth have made this their's. Let me say emphatically that this will be gained, the only question that remains, when, and at what price.

What is the price that the young and those dedicated to them are willing to pay? No one really can say; however, here are some indications. In Los Angeles, one of the teachers, along with five others, who tried to give intelligent direction to the youth, today is being charged with a felony. The powers are attempting to revive an old California law (conspiracy to commit a misdemeanor is a felony). This is now in the courts, and will be a serious political battle. In Los Angeles, although the Mexican American community was aided by blacks and whites in protest, picketing and walkouts, the only ones arrested were the Mexican Americans. The question is why.

In Santa Ana, California, parents and students have complained that thousands of Mexican American children in first and second grades have been placed in classes for the mentally retarded. This is their answer for bilingual education. The Mexican American Legal Defense Fund is presently taking the district to Federal Court seeking damages and remedy.

Further, the beating of a small child in Sierra Blanca, Texas, saw the removal of the children in mass by parents, and subsequent boycotting of the school followed until appropriate assurances were made.

In Edcouch Elsa, a small town in the Texas Valley, the demands for better education and subsequent walk-outs were met with 90 students being

suspended. Arrests of students demonstrators for better education was evident. One student was arrested in his home for picketing at the school. On readmission to the school one student was forced to lie under the teacher's desk for the period of the class. Yet, the federal courts over-turned the decision of the superintendent and the school board, however the process of the courts is slow. In a movement, how long will indignations such as the foregoing be tolerated? What are their objectives? Are they compatible with our national goal for educational improvement?

In San Antonio, Edgewood School District, a young teacher who assisted the students was subsequently fired, publicly humiliated by a vote of removal from the local teachers association.

The chief of the Mexican American Affairs Unit of the U. S. Office of Education reported a survey of five southwestern states. During the survey Armando Rodriquez held some 101 meetings involving 1,765 participants.

Principal participants were state department officials, personnel from teacher training institutions, school board association, regional labs, public school personnel, professional associations, and various citizen groups. Let me share with you the astonishing findings from that survey:

1. It is evident that there is a serious shortage of educational programs directed toward the needs of Mexican Americans in the five states surveyed.

2. There is a serious problem related to the transmission of information concerning those programs which do exist and are effective in their locations. It was observed frequently that one location would be completely unaware of a promising educational program in progress in an adjacent area.

The final work to which I call your attention is one that will be distributed here at the conference. It makes reference to the REPORT BY THE NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON MEXICAN AMERICAN EDUCATION (1968). I concur whole heartedly with the six critical issues, the four imperatives for educational success of the Mexican American, and the specific action on several fronts. What is not spelled out, however, is the need for drastic attitudinal change that must take place with those who formulate and implement any program; for the success of any effort, regardless of the amount of money and ideas at hand, will immediately and directly depend on attitude. The other effort expresses the need for the revamping of history, to show the Mexican American his rightful place in the development of this country. Dr. Manuel Ramirez calls it "Identity crisis in the Mexican American Adolescent." In a sense, then, perhaps we can say an awareness must take place in all of us, but especially those who we train. The awareness is accepting children as they are, as creatures of God, as citizens with a future, and with dignity as precious as our own.

I have presented you a mosaic of expressions from your own NEA, national and state conferences, witnesses from around the country in preparation for the successful bilingual bill, witnesses for the Commission on Civil Rights, expressions from angry youth from around the Southwest. May I now present you the torch and the challenge. The Siesta is Over, it is time to build. In accepting it, you can make the difference in generations to come. As you proceed the fruits of your labors will take one of two paths:

a) If your efforts are not fruitful, then you and I, the Southwest and the Nation will see a continued waste of human frustration, despair, anger and a situation for which the young, as evidenced, will no longer stand. Together we will suffer the consequences.

On the other hand:

b) Your efforts might see multiplied many beautiful events of 1968 which contributed to what I call the "Dissolvement of a myth." Some of these efforts have already taken place:

1. The Teacher Excellence Program of Our Lady of the Lake College, San Antonio serves as an example. Approximately 30 Mexican American students from the barrio, are undertaking a college program who financially could not afford it. They are training to become bilingual educators, with a minor in sociology. They have averaged ahead of their freshmen peers by the end of the school year.

2. Another example is the Ling-Temco-Vought Experience. Over 800 families moved to Dallas from the valley and are being trained for industrial work. Over 75 percent of the workers, working 12-14 hours a day are going to night school. The average turn-over of these workers is less than the normal turn over for the plans. The first zero defect panel for one of their large air planes was produced by these workers. This presents a strange picture for those who have been viewed as lazy, shiftless, carefree, and uninterested in education. This has been possible because someone cared, someone gave them a chance.

3. A third example is Holy Cross High School in San Antonio. Located in the midst of the poorest of the 18 school districts of this community, this school manages to send 80 percent of its graduates to college. Again, someone cared and gave the disadvantaged a chance.

The use of Spanish by some of our Mexican American leaders has depicted the importance of bilingualism. The following are three examples:

1. Dr. Braulio Alonzo, former national president of the N.E.A., representing the Department of State at an International Educational Conference in Mexico City, received a standing ovation by addressing the delegation (who had heard speakers in Russian and French) in Spanish, the language of the host country.

2. Dr. Hector Garcia, as alternate delegate to the U.N., addressed the United Nations in Spanish for the first time in its history. In doing so, he helped break down barriers which existed with Spain. He also was asked to convey the condolences of the French people to Costa Rica in their language - Spanish.

3. The Kelly Field worker, with pride, can cut down six weeks work in Peru to three because he can communicate more understandably with their people. He returns not only with a job well done, but with certificates, medals, plaques for outstanding good will between both countries.

Can you imagine what it will be like tommorrow if we really make the effort described in this presentation. The topics and speakers chosen for this conference will help you pave the way you choose. Now

that many children, many communities will be awaiting what you have to say and subsequently do, we cannot afford to let this be just another conference. May our efforts cause a new resurrection from Las Cruces, of Nuevo Mexico. Congratulations for coming. Now let us get down to the task ahead of us, and may God Bless each of you.

Adios!

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